Sir Thomas Lawrence, *Lady Louisa Manners, Later Countess of Dysart, as Juno*. 61.220

PORTRAITURE

The image of the individual

November 22-January 22

Kitagawa Utamaro, *The Courtesan Takigawa of Ogiya*. 1560/378

We often know when we look at a painting or sculpture, without any conscious effort of thought, without knowing the identity of the sitter, that we are looking at a portrait. For some reason we feel that we might have known the person depicted. This sense of recognition is by no means accidental.

For hundreds of years artists studied those features of the human face—age, shape, bone structure, facial expression—that express aspects of human character. From this study they produced types and characters for use in the visual narratives they created. Hercules, for instance, is usually shown with a broad, furrowed brow; deeply set, widely spaced eyes; a strong, broad nose; and a square, bearded chin. His face immediately conveys the strength and resolution that are central to the role he plays. But if the great characters of history and religion looked like the individuals we see around us, the great ideas they represent would be lost in our interest in the particularities of those almost-familiar faces.

In the portrait, on the other hand, the artist observes those specific details—a nose that is fleshy or narrow, eyes that are large or small, cheekbones more or less prominent—that combine to make a face individual. The accidents of nature or habit—a line or wrinkle, a mole or dimple, a none-too-close shave—add to the individuality of the face.

But a great portrait is not a mere physical likeness of a person. If the figures in a history painting portray qualities of personality, the perceptive portrait captures the sitter's distinctive character, temperament, and way of life. The factors that convey these qualities cannot often be enumerated or described; we grasp them intuitively, just as the artist probably did.

There is, of course, always a certain degree of generalization in a portrait. We can often detect, for instance, hints of contemporary fashion; some sitters want to be flattered, and the artist will then subtly alter their features to make them conform more closely to the current image of a handsome man or beautiful woman. The artist himself may have habitual ways of seeing that affect the way he depicts his subjects: we realize this when we recognize a portrait by Rubens, Reynolds, or Kazan, just from the traits these artists tend to impose on the faces they paint.

The portrait, like any other genre, has its conventions, and these can sometimes tell us without any further information that we are looking at a portrait. The bust portrait, which first appeared in the West in Etruscan and Roman sculpture, reflects the psychological reality of our personal encounters with others. When we stand close to someone in conversation, for instance, our angle of vision is focused on the head and shoulders and from them we form our impression of that person. Though the bust portrait is often an of-

ficial and formal one, especially in association with monumental and commemorative architecture, it nevertheless implies physical proximity of sitter to viewer, thereby striking a rather personal note. By contrast the full-length portrait implies sufficient distance between subject and viewer to enable us to take in the full image of the figure. This physical distance creates a psychological and social distance from the sitter as well. Consequently the full-length format is a natural one for the public, formal portrait.

Other important elements of portraiture are the pose and visual focus of the sitter. Usually there is little or no motion implied or shown; the subject is therefore not apparently doing anything—that is, he is not involved in any action which itself is the subject of the painting. In addition, the sitter is often looking at some point outside the space of the painting. By contrast, a history painting portrays an action, and the characters involved in it usually focus on some part of that action, just as actors on the stage generally avoid breaking—by direct visual contact with the audience—the illusion of the fiction they are enacting. The absence of narrative and the sitter's visual focus outside the pictorial space imply that the subject of the portrait is there for one purpose only: to present himself, as himself, to the viewer.

If we respond less intuitively to portraits from other cultures, it is largely because we are that much less familiar with their conventions of portraiture. In the Orient, for example, it is common practice for a written statement to accompany a portrait, usually in the form of a prominent inscription. Typically it not only identifies the individual but also comments upon his character, the accuracy of the likeness, or perhaps his spiritual attainment if he is a religious figure. Indeed, images of religious and cultural leaders represent the most important type of Oriental portraiture. The likenesses of such key figures have been transmitted faithfully for centuries as each generation of artists makes new images following traditional conventions of composition and drawing. These have changed only slightly over the centuries, perhaps most dramatically in the eighteenth century through contact with the West. Oriental artists have always favored the revelation of inner character over outward appearance.

Throughout the history of portraiture, both in the East and West, artists have combined and re-combined the elements that compose the portrait—individual features, notions of ideal beauty, traditional or novel formulas, psychological effects—to create the works of art we call portraits. But no matter how thoroughly we examine the portrait as a category of artistic expression, we will still be confronted by questions. When the artist draws or paints or models from the living model, as is so often the case, is the result

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necessarily a portrait? Does the image convey a lively sense of individuality, or does the subject represent a more general idea—a particular profession or a social class, for instance? How often is the artist able to transcend the assumptions of social structure and perceive a member of another class as a distinct individual? Are we more aware of the artist's brilliant performance in a given work than we are of the personality of the sitter? If a good portrait does more than record mere physical likeness, how does a mechanical process like photography operate to reveal inner qualities of personality? We can only ask ourselves questions of this sort in front of the individual work of art, but our attempts to answer them can greatly enhance our understanding and enjoyment of the portrait.

Irving Penn, *Colette.* 66.141

Abbreviations

The checklist on the reverse side refers to Museum publications that provide further information about some objects and employs the following abbreviations. *Bulletin* references are identified by month and year, others by catalogue entry number.

Bulletin: The Bulletin of The Cleveland Museum of Art
Reflections: Reflections of Reality in Japanese Art (1983)
8 Dynasties: Eight Dynasties of Chinese Painting (1980)
Greene Coll.: Portrait Miniatures: The Edward B. Greene Collection (1951)
Eur. Ptgs., pt. 3: European Paintings of the 16th, 17th, and 18th Centuries. The Cleveland Museum of Art Catalogue of Paintings, Part Three (1982)
Eur. Ptgs., pt. 1: European Paintings Before 1500. The Cleveland Museum of Art Catalogue of Paintings, Part One (1974)

The Fashionable Portrait

Anonymous French Master, *Portrait of a Nobleman.* 63.503 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 1, 6)
Jean Baptiste Lemoyne II, *Bust of a Woman.* 52.566
Frans Hals, *Portrait of a Lady in a Ruff.* 48.137 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* Pt. 3, 103)
Sir Thomas Lawrence, *Lady Louisa (Tollemache) Manners (1745-1840), Later Countess of Dysart, as Juno.* 61.220 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 3, 83)
William Merritt Chase, *Portrait of Miss Dora Wheeler.* 21.1239 *(Bulletin,* Jan. '65 & Feb. '78)
Julia Margaret Cameron, *Marie Spartali.* 74.52 *(Bulletin,* Feb. '75)
Utagawa Toyokuni, *The Courtesan Hinazuru of the Chojiya.* 15602/248
Katsukawa Shunsho, *Tanikaze Kajinosuke of Edo, the Best Wrestler in Japan.* 30.209

The Official Portrait

Robert Nanteuil, *Portrait of Louis XIV.* 51.82
Roman. *The Co-Emperor Lucius Verus.* 52.260 *(Bulletin,* March '53)
Korea. *Portrait of an Official.* 82.35
Hyacinthe Rigaud, *Portrait of Cardinal Dubois.* 67.17*(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 3, 52)
Alessandro Algardi, *Pope Innocent X (Gian Battista Pamphili).* 57.496 *(Bulletin,* April '62)
Japan. *Portrait of the Zen Master Hottō Kokushi.* 70.67 *(Reflections,* 67)
Lang Shih-ning (Giuseppe Castiglione), *Inauguration Portrait of Emperor Ch'ien-lung, The Empress, and Eleven Imperial Consorts.* 69.31 *(8 Dynasties,* 262)
India. *Portrait of Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur.* 81.5

The Intimate Portrait

Nicolas de Largillière, *Portrait of Anne Louis Goislard de Montsabert, Comte de Richebourg-le-Toureil.* 70.31 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 3, 36)
Circle of Jacques Louis David, *Citizen Crouzet.* 43.659
Peter Paul Rubens, *Portrait of Isabella Brant.* 47.207 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 3, 10)
Auguste Rodin, *Mignon: Bust of Rose Beuret (Madame Rodin).* 46.351
Lucian Freud, *Portrait of Ib.* 79.15
Watanabe Kazan, *Portrait of Kō Sūkoku.* 76.8 *(Reflections,* 122)
Kitagawa Utamaro, *The Courtesan Takigawa of Ogiya.* 15602/378

Realism in the Portrait

Anonymous Master, Netherlands (?), *Portrait of a Lady.* 62.259 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 1, 57)
Giovanni Battista Moroni, *Portrait of Vincenzo Guarignoni.* 62.1 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 3, 167)
Frederick Sandys, *Portrait of Mrs. Susanna Rose.* 79.81 *(Bulletin,* Dec. '80)
Walker Evans, *Alabama Cotton Tenant Farmer's Wife.* 73.120 *(Bulletin,* Feb. '75)
Hilaire-Germain Edgar Degas, *Portrait of the Duchess of Montejasi-Cicerale.* 58.28
Kita Genki, *Portrait of the Chinese Priest Dokuryū.* 65.31 *(Reflections,* 80)
Japan. *Portrait of Priest Seigen.* 82.55 *(Reflections,* 53)

The Emblematic Portrait

Hans Holbein the Younger, *Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam.* 32.314
Hans Holbein the Younger, *Terminus: The Device of Erasmus of Rotterdam.* 71.166 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 3, 69).
Richard Lindner, *Louis II.* 65.450
Japan. *Poet Kakinomoto No Hitomaro.* 77.203

The Miniature

Egypt. *Head of King Weserkaf.* 79.2 *(Bulletin,* Sept. '82)
Greek. *Silver Tetradrachm. 16.994*
England. Triple Unite. 69.195
France. *Charles VIII of France.* 78.58

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Peter Dell, *Portrait Plaque of Georg Knauer.* 27.427
Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn, *Rembrandt Wearing a Soft Cap.* 34.346
India. *Portrait of the Emperor Shah Jahan.* 20.1969
Joseph Roettiers, *Medal: Louis XIV.* 68.32
Friedrich Heinrich Füger, *Count Tschernitscheff, Russian Ambassador at Vienna.* 42.1141 *(Greene Coll.,* 79)
Jean-Baptiste-Jacques Augustin, *Study for Self-Portrait.* 40.1202 *(Greene Coll.,* 55)
Rosalba Giovanna Carriera, *Lady at Her Dressing Table.* 40.1203 *(Greene Coll.,* 84)
Jean Petitot, *Louis XIV.* 40.1216 *(Greene Coll.,* 74)
Andrew Plimer, *Mrs. Anna Walmesley.* 43.648 *(Greene Coll.,* 29)

The Artist and His World

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James McNeill Whistler, *Becquet, the Fiddler.* 22.434
Irving Penn, *Colette.* 66.141
Theodore Louis Auguste Rivière, *Bust of Tolstoy.* 65.10
Henri Cartier-Bresson, *Henri Matisse.* 73.123 *(Bulletin,* Feb. '75)
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, *Yvette Guilbert Intoxicated.* 25.1055
Tsunoda Kunisada, *Portrait of the Actor Nakamura Utaemon III as the Monkey Trainer Yōjirō.* 15602/240
Jean-Etienne Liotard, *Portrait of François Tronchin.* 78.54 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 3, 227)
Wang Hui, *Portrait of An Ch'i.* 71.17 *(8 Dynasties,* 259)
Emile-Jean Horace Vernet, *Self-Portrait in His Studio, Rome.* 77.171 *(Bulletin, May '80)*
Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, *Self-Portrait with Hat.* 65.440
Jacques-Emile Blanche, *Self-Portrait with Raphael de Ochoa.* 80.230
Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn, *Self-Portrait with Cap Pulled Forward, Self-Portrait Frowning, Self-Portrait with Curly Hair and White Collar.* 47.487-.489
Ando Kaigetsudō, *The Actor Sanjō Kantaro.* 61.41
Fang Shih-shu and Yeh Fang-lin, *The Literary Gathering at a Yangchou Garden.* 79.72 *(8 Dynasties,* 275)

The Others

Roman. *Portrait of a Man.* 25.944
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Chou Ch'en, *Beggars and Street Characters.* 64.94 *(8 Dynasties,* 160)
Diego Rodriguez de Silva Velázquez, *Portrait of the Jester Calabazas.* 65.15 *(Eur. Ptgs.* pt. 3, 223)
Watanabe Kazan, *Portrait of Ozorabuzaemon.* 80.177 *(Reflections,* 127)
August Sander, *Berlin Upholsterer.* 75.86 *(Bulletin,* Feb. '81)
Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *Young Boy Dressed in a Red-Lined Cloak.* 42.49 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 3, 30)
Dirck van Santvoort, *Portrait of a Young Girl with a Flute.* 75.81 *(Eur. Ptgs.,* pt. 3, 120)
Roman. *Portrait Bust of a Boy.* 51.288 *(Bulletin,* Nov. '51)
India. *Blind Raja.* 68.41
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Kitabatake Shigemasa, *Two Beauties.* 15602/326

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